



Fact Sheet: Tsunami Warnings via Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)

NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) is now able to activate Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) capable cell phones for the most critical Tsunami Warnings.

Tsunami Warnings only: The NWS will activate WEA for Tsunami Warnings. [Tsunami Information Statements, Advisories, and Watches](#) will not be sent via WEA, but will be available on tsunami.gov and all other NWS dissemination systems.

At first, NWS will activate WEA for Tsunami Warnings when a Tsunami Watch or Tsunami Advisory was not previously in effect. This essentially limits WEA Tsunami Warnings to major near-field sources, such as a rupture of the Cascadia fault zone which would go immediately into Tsunami Warning status without a previous Tsunami Advisory or Tsunami Watch being issued.

This capability is a first step toward enabling WEA activation for **all** Tsunami Warnings, including those when a watch or advisory was previously in effect, by May 2014. This will occur after software enhancements that process warning data are rigorously tested at NWS Headquarters and implemented. This will ensure tsunami warnings are put out via WEA for both local and distant tsunami source events.

First warning only: Only the first Tsunami Warning will activate WEA. Subsequent tsunami warnings from the same event will not activate WEA. Cancellations will also not activate WEA since partial cancellations will cause cancellation of the entire WEA broadcast. This information will be available on tsunami.gov and all other NWS dissemination systems.

Tsunami WEA message: WEA messages are limited to 90 characters. The following wording was selected after a rigorous review process that took into account that areas under Tsunami Warning usually span multiple counties/boroughs and state borders and tsunami waves will reach shorelines at different times: *Tsunami danger on the coast. Go to high ground or move inland. Listen to local news.* -NWS

WEA-enabled mobile devices to receive messages within a FIPS-code warning area: While tsunami warnings are issued for NWS zones, NWS zones are not understood by WEA. Tsunami WEA activation will target the FIPS code (i.e., county level) until next generation tsunami alert authoring tools provide the capability for NWS to describe the warning area more precisely. However, the WEA message will include "Tsunami danger on the coast" to convey the actual warning area for WEA recipients.

More information: Please visit the [Wireless Emergency Alert page](#) on the National Weather Service website or contact your local [National Weather Service Forecast Office](#).